

## Egg Industry Consultative Committee

The primary objective of the Egg Industry Consultative Committee is to contribute to the Food Authority's goal of ensuring the production and sale of Eggs and Egg products that are safe and suitable for human consumption, by advising on policy and practices introduced into provisions of the Egg Food Safety Scheme as it relates to Eggs and Egg products, and developed through a consultative process. Other government agencies may seek to use the broad expertise and experience of the Committee members to obtain advice on matters beyond the scope of the provisions of the Egg Food Safety Scheme.

### Summary of outcomes

## Egg Industry Consultative Committee

15 April 2026

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The Egg Industry Consultative Committee met via video conference on Wednesday 15 April 2026. Issues considered at the meeting are detailed below.

### Attendees:

**Egg Industry Consultative Committee:** Georgia Byriell (The Henn House), Melinda Hashimoto (Egg Farmers of Australia), Brett Langfield (NSW Farmer's Association), Peter Matuszny (Manning Valley Free Range Eggs), Rowan McMonnies (Australian Eggs), Amanda Walker (Australian Eggs).

**NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) – Biosecurity & Food Safety:** Joanna Blunden (Development Officer - Poultry Eggs), Peta Easy (Leader Pigs & Poultry), David Cusack (Manager, Food Standards & Programs), Jaime Garcia (Secretariat), Jannene Geoghegan (Acting Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer), Melisa Norris (Acting Manager of Food Policy and Partnerships), Patrick Phillips (Team Leader Regulatory Operations), Craig Shadbolt (Chair – Acting - Director, Food Safety & CEO NSW Food Authority), Petrea Wait (Senior Policy & Project Officer, Animal Welfare Policy and Performance Branch).

### Apologies:

Jo Coombe (Director Animal Biosecurity), Tina Clifton (Senior Veterinary Policy & Project officer), Nadine Davis (Australian Eggs), Eric Davis (Manager of Food Policy and Partnerships), Andrew Davies (Chair – Acting - Director, Food Safety & CEO NSW Food Authority), Grant Dearden (Pace Farm), Mark Mackie (Manager Regulatory Operations), Franko Pirovic (Pirovic Enterprises), Brendan Sharpe (Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer).

### Conflict of interest declaration

Members confirmed that they had no conflicts of interest.

### Industry updates

Australian Eggs provided the following updates:

The Australian Eggs project on *Salmonella Enteritidis* (SE) modelling, undertaken in partnership with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), was completed in January 2026. This project examined the impact of SE vaccination on the risk of egg contamination and will help inform the development of a risk-based management framework for SE detection.

Updated versions of the Egg Standards of Australia (ESA) Grading and Packing Assurance Program, which covers the hygienic collection, cleaning, candling, weighing, and packaging of eggs, are scheduled for release in June 2026.

Emergency Animal Disease preparedness for H5 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) is progressing. Priorities include supporting industry sustainability in the event of a large-scale outbreak, assessing the feasibility of H5 HPAI vaccination, exploring options to mitigate the risks of aerosol spread of avian influenza during disposal activities, outdoor composting for disposal of mass mortalities and options for the management of infected or contaminated eggs during an outbreak.

The Committee was made aware of the importance of biosecurity decontamination procedures for NSW DPIRD compliance staff entering properties. Compliance staff will be reminded of the necessity to adhere to the biosecurity protocols when visiting farms.

The reuse of egg cartons for commercial sales by butchers selling eggs raises concerns within the industry. NSW DPIRD staff will work with local councils to ensure safe, compliant selling practices and address issues like incorrect labelling or improper packaging.

The 2026 fuel crisis has impacted the Australian egg industry, highlighting its extreme vulnerability to logistics disruptions, particularly in the transport of day-old chicks from hatcheries to rearing farms.

Egg Farms of Australia (EFA) provided the following updates:

- The start of the year has been challenging for egg farmers. However, Easter has provided a welcome boost, and the Greek Orthodox Easter kept some farmers busy.
- The engagement of the Hon Julie Collins, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, through regular roundtable meetings and the establishment of a fuel and fertiliser taskforce have been appreciated by industry.
- Despite these efforts, a reduction in fuel excise has not alleviated transporters' fuel levies, and gas prices have risen by 20%. Urea prices in Queensland (QLD) are highly elevated, and packaging costs from overseas continue to climb. Some farmers report freight costs are double or triple due to product movements.
- There are concerns about steady supplies of Methionine for layer diets.
- EFA has reduced costs by moving board meetings online.
- A recent webinar held by ExoFlare discussed quicker permitting for biosecurity responses, while wind and waterborne testing is also being explored.

- In the area of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), visits to Japan revealed insights on managing H5, and our R&D Corporation is progressing in nitrogen trials and vaccination efforts.
- Members have been informed about legal recourse if their logos are misused, particularly regarding harassment by drones from animal activists.
- This year marks a decade of Egg Farmers of Australia, emphasising our ongoing commitment to animal welfare, biosecurity, food safety, and supporting younger professionals in the industry.

## 1) Matters raised relating to the Egg Food Safety Scheme

### Food safety compliance report

NSW DPIRD Compliance and Integrity Systems Unit provided an update on the egg industry compliance activities for the period from July to December 2025. 95 percent of licensed egg industry businesses recorded an acceptable audit and/or inspection result. A total of 211 audits and inspections were conducted, with 11 enforcement actions issued. Biosecurity and Food Safety Compliance will continue to focus resources on helping the egg industry meet its SE testing requirements through the collection and review of testing submissions and results. Compliance activities in the egg sector will remain ongoing and continue to serve as an essential component of broader DPIRD risk mitigation strategies.

In September 2025, the Food Regulation was updated to include Salmonella Enteritidis controls previously captured in Control Orders under the Biosecurity Act. There are no practical changes to these control measures on farm, however, the department created resources to enable better inclusion of controls into existing food safety controls and documentation. These resources bring all the controls and monitoring into a single document to manage food safety and biosecurity. Having a one stop shop will simplify DPIRD compliance checks, reducing audit and inspection time and making it easier for producers.

## 2) Other matters raised

### Animal welfare update

DPIRD'S Animal Welfare Unit presented a paper on the following matters:

#### Australian Animal Welfare Poultry Standards & Guidelines (S&G)

- DPIRD met with poultry stakeholders in December 2025 to further consult on the Poultry Standards and their implementation into NSW legislation. The Department is currently in the process of considering the details of all the consultation feedback that was received from targeted stakeholders in February 2026. The feedback from all stakeholders will be used to inform future decision-making and implementation of the Standards in NSW. Further consultation will be performed by the Department.

#### Livestock Processing Standards

- *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Livestock at Processing Establishments* (the processing standards) will replace the 2002 [Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals: Livestock at Slaughtering Establishments](#). While this large and complex project has taken longer than anticipated, the Animal Welfare Task Group (AWTG) remains committed to delivering this important work.

A sub-group of the AWTG is working to address jurisdictional feedback on a third draft of the processing standards in preparation for public consultation in 2025-26 (as per AWTG webpage 6/3/26). Industry is requesting further consultation with before to any drafts being released for public consultation.

*The date for the next meeting of the Egg Industry Consultative Committee is  
Wednesday 16 September 2026.*